

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 /078 W
----- 111951 /43

P R 131657Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4050
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 20926

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GW
SUBJECT: SPD/FDP COALITION NEGOTIATIONS WIND UP

REFS: A. BONN 16937; B. BONN 18200; C. BONN 20857
NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE SPD AND FDP HAVE COMPLETED BASIC
NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW COALITION TO BE SWORN IN
DECEMBER 16. ALTHOUGH IT IS EXPECTED THAT SCHMIDT
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WILL RECEIVE THE NECESSARY 249 VOTES ON DECEMBER 15,

SPECULATION ABOUT POSSIBLE DEFECTIONS MAKES THE COALITION LEADERS NERVOUS. THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE LEFT A RESIDUE OF ILL FEELING IN THE RANKS OF BOTH PARTIES, AND LAST WEEK'S VIRULENT FLARE-UP OVER THE PLAN TO DEFER A PROMISED HIKE IN PENSION BENEFITS HAS COMPOUNDED THAT PROBLEM. THE OUTLOOK IS THAT ENHANCED INTERNAL FRICTION WILL PLAGUE THE NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER WEEKS OF INTENSIVE DICKERING, WITH TIME OUT FOR LAST MONTH'S FDP NATIONAL CONVENTION, THE SPD AND FDP HAVE COMPLETED THE BASIC NEGOTIATION FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENT WHICH THEY PLAN TO FORM THIS WEEK. THE SPD AND FDP FRAKTIONEN MEET TODAY TO REVIEW THE COALITION'S POLICY DECLARATION, WHICH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT WILL READ IN THE BUNDESTAG ON DECEMBER 16.

2. TWO OF THE MORE DRAMATIC ISSUES IN THE COALITION NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNED PERSONNEL AND PENSION MATTERS. PERSONNEL ISSUES ARE LARGELY SETTLED. THE NEXT COALITION CABINET WILL HAVE TWO NEW SPD MINISTERS: ANTJE HUBER (FAMILY AND YOUTH) AND MARIE SCHLEI (ECONOMIC COOPERATION). THE COALITION PARTNERS ALSO SELECTED SIX NEW PARLIAMENTARY STATE SECRETARIES. THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL OF THESE IS HANS-JUERGEN WISCHNEWSKI, WHO IS EXPECTED TO MOVE OVER FROM MINISTER OF STATE IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO SUCCEED MARIE SCHLEI AS STATE SECRETARY OF THE CHANCELLERY. THE QUESTION REMAINS AS TO WHETHER WISCHNEWSKI WILL TAKE ON BROADER DUTIES -- E.G., INNER-GERMAN OR THIRD WORLD AFFAIRS -- WHICH GENSCHER HAD INSISTED DURING COALITION TALKS MUST REMAIN IN FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. THE PENSIONS DISPUTE PROVED TO BE A MUCH MESSIER TASK. LAST WEEK'S ERUPTION OF GRASS-ROOTS AND CADRE OPPOSITION TO THE LEADERSHIP'S PLAN FOR A SIX-MONTH DEFERRAL OF A PROMISED HIKE IN PENSION BENEFITS (REF C)

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ADDED NEW DRAMA AND BITTERNESS TO THE FINAL PHASE OF
COALITION TALKS. OVER THE WEEKEND, THE SPD AND FDP
NEGOTIATING TEAM ANNOUNCED A COMPLEX AND TENTATIVE
AGREEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT, THE GIST OF WHICH IS THAT
THE 9.9 PERCENT RISE IN PENSIONS WILL GO INTO EFFECT
NEXT JULY 1, AS SCHEDULED AND AS PROMISED BY BOTH
PARTIES DURING THE RECENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN. (SEPTTEL
COVERS DETAILS OF PENSION PROBLEMS.) HOWEVER, THIS
AGREEMENT MUST STILL RECEIVE FINAL APPROVAL BY THE
FRAKTIONEN OF THE SPD AND THE FDP.
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4. HOWEVER, THE INITIAL PENSION AGREEMENT DID NOT
SETTLE ALL THE DUST WHICH LAST WEEK'S CONTRETEMPS HAD
RAISED. BOTH THE RANK-AND-FILE AND OTHER GROUPS
REMAIN UNHAPPY OVER THE WAY IN WHICH THE SPD/FDP
LEADERSHIP CONSIDERED RENEGING ON ITS CAMPAIGN COMMITMENT.
A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE PRESS HAS BLASTED THE GOVERNMENT
FOR ITS HANDLING OF THE PENSIONS ISSUE. PREDICTABLY,
THE CURRENT CDU/CSU WHIP (REDDEMANN) ANNOUNCED THAT
THE UNION WILL OPPOSE THE PENSIONS MEASURES IN THE

BUNDESRAT.

5. COMMENT: THE OUTCOME OF THE COALITION TALKS, AND
EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE PENSION PROBLEM, HAVE ADDED A
NEW BURDEN TO THE ALREADY ENCUMBERED RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE SPD AND THE FDP. ALTHOUGH WE DISCOUNT SENSATION-
ALIST CLAIMS THAT SCHMIDT MIGHT NOT REACH THE 249-VOTE
ABSOLUTE MAJORITY HE NEEDS IN ORDER TO BE ELECTED
CHANCELLOR ON DECEMBER 15, RECENT EVENTS HAVE CLEARLY
INCREASED HIS MARGIN FOR FAILURE, IN VIEW OF THE FACT
THAT THE COALITION HAS ONLY 253 SATS IN THE BUNDESTAG.
END COMMENT.
STOESSEL

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